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NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF STATE & TERRITORIAL AIDS DIRECTORS

Global Program Country Profile BOTSWANA

NASTAD

The National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) represents the United States' chief state and territorial health department program directors responsible for coordinating, administering, and managing HIV prevention, care, and support services. NASTAD's Global Program works to build the organizational, programmatic and human resource capacity of its regional /state public sector AIDS program counterparts across the world. In Botswana, NASTAD works in partnership with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Global AIDS Program (CDC/GAP) as a part of the unified U.S. response to the HIV pandemic through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

HIV/AIDS IN BOTSWANA

The country of Botswana is a middle income landlocked country located in Southern Africa with an estimated population of 1.6 million. According to the 2010 UNAIDS Report of the Global AIDS Epidemic, Botswana has the second-highest HIV adult prevalence rate in Sub-Saharan Africa, estimated at 24.8%. UNAIDS estimates that there are 320,000 HIV infected people in the country. HIV is most prevalent among Batswana aged 25-34 years. According to the Botswana AIDS Impact Survey (BAIS II Survey), young women are at higher risk for HIV infection than their male counterparts.

The government of Botswana has taken an active role in its response to HIV/AIDS. The National AIDS Coordinating Agency (NACA) was formed in 1999 by a cabinet directive under the Office of the President and is charged with coordinating and facilitating the nation's response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In its First National Strategic Framework 2003-2009 (NSF I), NACA outlines a decentralized strategy to address the epidemic. This response is led by District Multi-Sectoral AIDS Committees (DMSACs) and District AIDS Coordinators (DACs) who develop and coordinate implementation of interventions, captured in annual work plans, to address the epidemic in their regions . However, the NSF acknowledges that "while the response at the district level has made some progress in terms of establishing co-ordination mechanisms, managing funds, and supporting activities, at present, these remain somewhat fragmented and lacking sound coordination". The NSF II identifies 4 strategic priority areas for its period of 2009- 2016, and provides a framework for NASTAD and MLG collaboration on HIV/AIDS.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

In Botswana, NASTAD works in partnership with BOTUSA (CDC-Botswana), Ministry of Local Government (MLG), and National HIV/AIDS Coordinating Agency (NACA) as part of three technical assistance (TA) and capacity building initiatives. : support of district evidence-based HIV planning; the Botswana Prevention works project and support for Community Capacity Enhancement Programs.

Evidence Based Planning

Since 2003, NASTAD has been engaged in building capacity in the planning and implementation of the district response by applying an evidence-based, community planning approach for the development of annual district comprehensive HIV plans.. NASTAD worked with MLG to develop revised national terms of reference for DMSACs and standardized national guidelines for the preparation of annual comprehensive plans, and now works in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government, Department of Primary Health Care Services (DPHCS) to provide in-depth on-site technical assistance and training to all DACs and DMSACs to help assure the development and implementation of high quality annual evidenced-based comprehensive district HIV plans.

NASTAD's evidence based planning (EBP) trainings and one-on-one mentoring support visits to DACs and DMSACs has resulted in a total of approximately 1,347 MLG headquarters staff, DACs, DMSAC members and Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) in all health districts being exposed to evidence based planning.

Botswana Prevention Works

During the planning process, NASTAD assists districts identify and select priority HIV activities for implementation by local partners. Ensuring implementation, effective management and appropriate monitoring of these activities is a natural extension of the district planning process.

Since 2008, NASTAD has provided ongoing organizational, financial and technical support to nine district level HIV prevention implementing partners in five districts in Botswana (Northeast, Kweneng West, Mahalapye, and Kanye/Moshupa) for the delivery of district level HIV prevention activities through its Botswana Prevention Works project.

The nine community based HIV prevention implementing partners have been provided with operational and programmatic technical assistance in support of HIV-related program implementation. Before the closing of the program on May 2011, at least 20,000 individuals were reached through community outreach programs of the implementing partners and about 350 people were trained to provide HIV prevention programs at the community level.

Community Capacity Enhancement Program (CCEP)

Beginning in 2010, NASTAD provides support to MLG and the National AIDS Coordinating Agency for the implementation of the Community Capacity Enhancement Program (CCEP). The program encourages the community to use available health and related services and build their capacity to manage social challenges by engaging them in an ongoing conversation. In 2010, NASTAD hired and seconded 14 project officers to 14 districts through MLG to support the implementation of CCEP program and trained 14 national level CCE Master Trainers and 65 trainers (ToTs) from 11 districts including 14 project officers.

NEW ACTIVITIES

Civil Society Strengthening (FHI/USAID)

In 2011, NASTAD partnered with Family Health International (FHI) for the implementation of the USAID funded Botswana Civil Society Strengthening Program that will strengthens government and civil society organizations to play their roles individually as well as come together to create a cohesive, seamless, cost effective and sustainable service delivery system. NASTAD will take the lead in building the capacity of DACs and DMSACs to lead the planning and coordination of the multisectorial district response.

Applied Public Health Management Training Program

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NASTAD is conducting a preparatory process to pilot a 1 year Applied Public Health Management Training Program for Middle and Senior Public Health Practitioners at District and National Levels in 2011. The goal of the program is to equip senior MLG officials and DACs with the essential public health management competencies needed to effectively manage the HIV care and treatment program, and improve the competency and confidence of DACs while addressing inefficiencies and inadequacies in the current training provisions, thereby promoting retention as well as an improved district HIV response. During FY 2011, NASTAD will undertake a needs assessment exercise which will clearly guide the development of the program and the way forward.

Products

- *DMSAC Evidence Based Planning Toolkit, February 2008*
- *Best Prevention Practices, February 2008*

Evaluation

An external evaluation commissioned by CDC conducted in 2009 revealed that the technical assistance provided by NASTAD has generally achieved its objective of providing all districts with training and in depth, on-site technical assistance to guide district staff and planning committees in the development of comprehensive HIV and AIDS district plans. The strengths of the technical assistance have been the provision of structure and focus, and encouragement for the use of evidence in the HIV and AIDS district planning process.

Next Steps

In 2011 and beyond, NASTAD plans to focus on the sustainability of its Community Capacity Enhancement Program (CCEP) activities by building the capacity of DPHCS to take over NASTAD CCEP training and support activities. At the same time NASTAD will seek to scale-up its Applied Public Health Management Training and Civil Society Strengthening programs to additional districts.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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